United Nations A/68/77–E/2013/13

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 May 2013

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Item 61 of the preliminary list*
Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2013
Item 11 of the provisional agenda**
Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2012/23, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 67/229, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-eighth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

In the forty-sixth year of its occupation of Palestinian territory, Israel continued in its practices and policies that violate the occupying Power's obligations under international law. These discriminatory policies, which "amount to de facto segregation", adversely affect the living conditions of the Palestinian population, with a dire impact on various Palestinian social and economic sectors, as well as on the Palestinian natural resources and environment.

* A/68/50.
** E/2013/100.

13-32665 (E) 110613

Please recycle

Excessive and disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces continued. The ill-treatment of Palestinian child detainees appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized. Israel's frequent use of administrative detention amounts to a policy of widespread and systematic arbitrary detention. Israeli authorities and settlers commit transgressions against Palestinians and their property with impunity.

Since 1967, Israel has revoked the residency status of more than 260,000 Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, while Israeli policies and practices, including home demolitions, lead to the forced displacement of Palestinians. Settler violence also is aimed mainly to force Palestinians to move from their lands.

The scale of Israel's settlement project in the occupied territories, as well as the construction of the West Bank wall, are not only illegal but also appear to confirm Israel's intention to retain control over large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, thus violating a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the acquisition of territory by the use or threat of force.

Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory face daily obstacles and humiliation to travel both inside and outside the territory, while the Gaza blockade amounts to collective punishment, also illegal under international law.

The continued Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan similarly includes policies and practices that discriminate against its Syrian citizens and encourage illegal Israeli settlement therein.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions and inputs of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States.

I. Introduction

1. Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/23 and General Assembly resolution 67/229 expressed the concerns of the two bodies about the practices of Israel, the occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, which violate international humanitarian law. These practices included actions that caused death and injuries to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law, as well as the rising incidence of violence by illegal, armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties, in addition to the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. Of concern also to the Council and the Assembly are the accelerated construction by Israel of settlements, the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources, the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure, the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem, and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including what amounts to a blockade of the Gaza Strip. The Council and Assembly, through their aforementioned resolutions, also highlighted the detrimental impact of Israeli practices on the natural resources and the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present note highlights the practices by Israel, the occupying Power, that are of concern to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly and that persisted over the reporting period. Although Israel cites security concerns to justify most of its policies and practices, the note indicates that many of these practices as well as the occupation regime constitute continuous violations of international law.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli policies affecting Palestinians

3. Israel implements policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory that "amount to de facto segregation", including the establishment of two entirely separate Israeli legal systems and sets of institutions for Jewish communities grouped in illegal settlements, on the one hand, and Palestinian populations living under Israeli military occupation in towns and villages, on the other. Furthermore, Palestinians do not enjoy either equal use of roads and infrastructure or equal access to basic services and water resources. Such separation is concretized by the implementation of a complex combination of restrictions on movement, the existence of separate roads and a permit regime that only impacts the Palestinian population.[1] Moreover, a matrix of military orders applies, by law or by practice, only to Palestinians to regulate and control most aspects of daily life, including by restricting an extensive range of rights (A/HRC/22/63, para. 40).

[1] CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 24.

4. In June 1967 Israel formally, yet illegally, annexed 70 km^2 of land incorporating East Jerusalem and a number of nearby Palestinian villages into the expanded boundaries of the Jerusalem municipality of Israel (ibid., para. 25).

5. For decades Israel has pursued a strategy that has led to the debilitation of East Jerusalem in every respect, including socioeconomic.[2] Furthermore, Israel has employed the following policies and practices: physically isolating East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank in part by building the wall; discrimination in planning and building; land expropriation and demolition of houses; revoking residency and social benefits of Palestinians; and inequitably disbursing the municipal budget between the two parts of the city (A/67/379, para. 16). The cumulative effects of these methods have led to the deterioration in the conditions of Palestinian East Jerusalemites.[3]

6. According to human rights organizations, since 2001, Israeli authorities have closed down at least 28 Palestinian organizations operating in Jerusalem that had been involved in educational, cultural and social activities for Palestinians in East Jerusalem.[4]

Planning and zoning

7. Area C constitutes over 60 per cent of the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem. As the only contiguous territory, it is the key to economic cohesion and is the most resource abundant space in the West Bank as it holds the majority of the territory's water, agricultural lands, natural resources and land reserves. Israel maintains full security control and control over building and planning in Area C. About 150,000 Palestinians live in 270 communities that are totally or partially in Area C.[5]

8. In Area C the zoning regime applied by Israel benefits the establishment and growth of settlements, while denying the development of Palestinian communities. This regime effectively allows Palestinian construction on 1 per cent of Area C. As a result, many Palestinians are left with no choice but to build without a permit, which leads to "inhumane Israeli responses involving demolition and displacement" (A/67/379, para. 15).

9. From 2005 to 2009, only 13 per cent of the Israeli building permits issued for housing units in East Jerusalem were granted to Palestinian neighbourhoods. In Jewish neighbourhoods, there is an average of 20 square metres of housing per resident, compared to 11 square metres in Palestinian neighbourhoods.[6]

Residency status

10. Since 1967, Israel has retained control over the residency status of the Palestinian population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, implementing discriminatory policies that often lead to the displacement of Palestinians.[7]

---

[2] ACRI, Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem, May 2012, p. 2.

[3] Ibid.; see paras. 86-95 below.

[4] A/67/372, para. 41; and The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, submission to the United Nations.

[5] Information received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

[6] ACRI, East Jerusalem in Numbers, http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/05/16/east-jerusalem-in-numbers/.

[7] Information received from OCHA.

11. Up until the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, Israel revoked the residency status of 250,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in addition to 14,188 Palestinian East Jerusalemites whose residency permits were revoked from 1967 to 2011.[8]

12. Israel regulates the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem almost as if they were foreign nationals living in Israel, with little regard for their status as protected persons under international humanitarian law (A/67/372, para. 38). If they reside outside Israel or East Jerusalem for a period of seven years, Palestinian residents lose their permanent residency status, as stipulated in the Entry into Israel Regulations of 2003.[9]

13. Policies that apply only to Palestinian residents of Jerusalem include the Entry into Israel Law, which stipulates that a permanent resident who marries a non-resident must submit, on behalf of the spouse, a request for "family unification" in order for the partner to reside in East Jerusalem, a process that has frozen for almost 10 years the entry of those spouses from the West Bank and Gaza.[10]

Disproportionate use of force

14. Excessive and disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces, including the Israeli military and border police, continued in the West Bank. Most injuries occurred during demonstrations, where Israeli Military Order 101 outlaws "assemblies", and Israeli troops use excessive force to disperse them, thereby violating Palestinians' right to peaceful protest. Civilians were also injured and killed as a result of the excessive use of force during other forms of military operations, including search and arrest raids (see A/67/372, paras. 15-24).

15. Apart from air strikes and military operations, methods used by the Israeli military to enforce the access-restricted areas in the Gaza Strip, including the use of live ammunition, violate the international humanitarian law principle of distinction, which establishes that civilians are not to be targeted (see A/67/372, paras. 8-10).

16. From 30 March 2012 to 29 March 2013, 268 Palestinians were killed and 4,483 others were injured. The vast majority of casualties involved civilians and were inflicted by Israeli security forces. A total of 132 Palestinian injuries were the result of settler attacks. Among the casualties, 42 Palestinian children were killed and 615 were injured. During the same period, 3 Israeli civilians were killed and 279 were injured, including 3 injured children.[11]

17. On 14 November 2012, Israel launched a military offensive against the Gaza Strip that went on until 21 November, during which Palestinian militants also shelled Israeli towns and army posts in Israel. At least 165 Palestinians were killed by Israeli military action, of whom 99 were civilians, including 13 women and 33 children. An additional 1,399 Palestinians were injured, the majority of whom

[8] See *Ceased Residency*, http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates1175; information received from OCHA.

[9] Information received from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); see also A/67/372, para. 38.

[10] Information received from OCHA.

[11] OCHA, Protection of Civilians: Casualties Database, http://www.ochaopt.org/poc.aspx?id=1010002; and OCHA Protection of Civilians Weekly Report, 19-25 March 2013; casualties include those who were injured or killed during the November 2012 offensive (see para. 17 below).

are believed to be civilians. During the offensive, 3 Israeli civilians were killed and 224 Israelis, most of whom were also civilians, were injured by Palestinian shelling. An additional six Palestinian civilians were killed by stray shells from Palestinian militants.[12]

18. A common denominator affecting all victims of unlawful acts of violence against Palestinians is the absence of effective investigations and redress for victims, leaving Israeli security apparatuses to enjoy significant impunity vis-à-vis such acts of violence against Palestinians.[13]

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

19. According to official Israeli figures, at the end of February 2013, about 4,713 Palestinian security detainees and prisoners were held in Israeli prisons, including 253 children.[14]

20. In addition to the denial of due process rights during trial and the conviction of Palestinian detainees in the Israeli military court system,[15] it has been reported that considerable physical and psychological pressure to sign confessions is placed on defendants during interrogations. Practices in this regard include beatings and threats, sleep deprivation, position abuse, prolonged cuffing, having family members threatened and, in some cases, arrested.[16] Some of such cases amount to torture (see A/67/550, para. 17).

21. On 24 February 2013, a Palestinian prisoner, Arafat Jaradat, lost his life during his incarceration in an Israeli prison, sparking wide protests across the West Bank amidst allegations that torture and ill-treatment caused his death. On 2 April 2013, another Palestinian prisoner, Maysara Abu Hamdiyeh, died while incarcerated in an Israeli prison from cancer amidst accusations of medical negligence and ill-treatment.[17] The Palestinian Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (ADDAMEER) maintains that since 1967, a total of 72 Palestinian prisoners have died under torture and 53 have died owing to medical neglect.[18]

22. Although the Israeli military issued an order raising the age of majority for Palestinians to 18 for security-related matters, children are not treated in a manner that takes into account their age, needs and special circumstances.[19] To the contrary, the ill-treatment of Palestinian children who are arrested, detained or prosecuted by the Israeli military system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized.[20]

23. Sixty per cent of all detentions of Palestinian children by Israeli security forces occur between midnight and 5 a.m. Eighty-seven per cent of Palestinian children in

[12] Information provided by OCHA.
[13] Information provided by OCHA.
[14] Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, and http://www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody.
[15] Information provided by OCHA; see also the concerns raised in the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (A/HRC/14/26/Add.1).
[16] Information provided by OCHA.
[17] http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/apr/02/palestinian-prisoners-israel-hunger-strike.
[18] ADDAMEER, http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=578.
[19] Information provided by OCHA.
[20] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013, p. 1.

detention are denied bail and thus remain detained until the conclusion of a legal process. Ninety per cent plead guilty in order to avoid extended pretrial detention. Israel uses solitary confinement for 12 per cent of Palestinian child detainees (see A/67/550, paras. 10-12).

24. Israel's treatment of Palestinian child detainees is grossly inconsistent with the treatment it affords the children of Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This discrimination includes the minimum age of the child to receive a custodial sentence or an adult sentence; the right to have a parent present during interrogation; having interrogations recorded audiovisually; the time limit for being held in custody before being brought before a judge; having access to a lawyer and without charges being brought; and the maximum period of time between charges and a trial (see A/67/550, para. 16). UNICEF reports that: "In no other country are children systematically tried by juvenile military courts that, by definition, fall short of providing the necessary guarantees to ensure respect for their rights".[21]

Administrative detention

25. Israel's frequent use of administrative detention amounts to a policy of widespread and systematic arbitrary detention (A/67/550, para. 20). One of the most problematic issues with such detention is that in most cases, evidence on which the detention order is based is kept secret and neither the detainee nor his or her counsel has access to it (see A/67/372, paras. 26-27). By the end of February 2013, 169 Palestinians remained under administrative detention, which constitutes a decline from the number of administrative detainees in 2012.[22]

26. Throughout 2012, more than 1,200 Palestinian prisoners reportedly participated in a series of hunger strikes to protest their conditions of detention and treatment by Israeli authorities, including the widespread use of administrative detention.[23]

Population displacement, property destruction and confiscation

27. Israeli military operations have been the main cause of forced displacement in the Gaza Strip. The November 2012 offensive led to the displacement of an additional 3,000 Palestinians whose homes had been destroyed or severely damaged.[24]

28. In 2012 the Israeli authorities demolished 540 Palestinian structures in Area C in the West Bank, including 165 homes. This resulted in the displacement of 815 people, including 474 children.[25] In January 2013 alone at least 139 structures, including 59 homes and other residential structures, were destroyed in 20 separate incidents.[26]

29. In a number of cases, emergency shelters and other items provided as a form of emergency response have similarly been demolished and/or confiscated by Israeli authorities.[27]

---

[21] UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013, p. 1.
[22] Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners.
[23] A/HRC/21/33/AUV, para. 19.
[24] Information received from OCHA.
[25] Information received from OCHA.
[26] OCHA, Humanitarian Monitor Monthly Report, January 2013, p. 14.
[27] Information received from OCHA.

30. During 2012, the Israeli authorities demolished 64 Palestinian structures in East Jerusalem comprising 24 residential structures and 40 others, including livelihood and animal structures, and 15 "self-demolitions" imposed by these authorities.[28]

31. Overall, there are at least 93,100 residents of East Jerusalem who live in structures built without permits and are therefore at potential risk of displacement.[29]

32. The forced eviction of Palestinians from their homes by settlers, backed by the Government, is in itself incompatible with international human rights law (see A/67/372, para. 31) and has contributed to changing the demography of East Jerusalem. The Government of Israel supports the settlers' actions by sending security forces to accompany the takeover of Palestinian homes (A/67/379, para. 16).

33. In July 2011 Israeli authorities indicated their intention to "relocate" approximately 27,000 Bedouin and herding Palestinians living in Area C. Should this plan be implemented, it would amount to individual and mass forcible transfers and forced evictions contrary to Israel's obligations under international law (A/67/372, para. 37).

34. Since the beginning of the occupation, Israel has seized over 1 million dunums[30] of Palestinian land (approximately 40 per cent of the West Bank) and placed it within the jurisdictional boundaries of local and regional settlement councils, prohibiting Palestinian access to that land (A/HRC/22/63, paras. 63-64).

Settlements and settler violence

35. The establishment of the settlements on occupied territories is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Convention IV of 1907. In building settlements and associated infrastructure, Israel further violates international law through the appropriation of Palestinian property not justified by military necessity (see A/67/379, paras. 11-12).

36. Israel defined settlements as "national priority areas", whose residents benefit from housing and education subsidies and direct incentives (A/HRC/22/63, para. 22). This amounts to the transfer by Israel of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory (see A/67/375, para. 10), which is prohibited under international law.[31]

37. The scale of Israel's settlement project and the massive financial investment in it appear to confirm Israel's intention to retain control over these areas, thus violating a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the acquisition of territory by the use or threat of force (see A/67/379, para. 12).

38. At present there are about 150 settlements together with approximately 100 unauthorized outposts.[32] The number of settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory stood at 536,932 in 2011, including 267,643 in East Jerusalem.[33] The

[28] http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2012_english.pdf.

[29] See paras. 7-9 above; see also OCHA Fact Sheet, *East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns Update*, December 2012, at http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2012_english.pdf.

[30] 1 dunum = 1,000 m^2.

[31] A/HRC/22/63, para. 38; Fourth Geneva Convention, article 49.

[32] Information provided by OCHA.

[33] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/settlmt2011E.pdf.

settler population (excluding that of East Jerusalem) has grown over the past decade at an average yearly rate of 5.3 per cent, compared with 1.8 per cent for the Israeli population as a whole. Israeli settlers now represent approximately 19 per cent of the overall population of the West Bank (see A/67/375, paras. 7 and 12).

39. On 30 November 2012, the day after the General Assembly accorded Palestine non-member Observer State status in the United Nations, the Government of Israel announced the advancement of the E1 settlement plan, comprising several thousand housing units.[34] This plan, if implemented, would completely sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and compromise the territorial contiguity between the northern and southern parts thereof.[35]

Settler violence

40. As the occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to protect the right to life and physical integrity of Palestinians.[36] Yet, various aspects of Palestinian life are significantly affected by a minority of settlers who are engaged in violence and intimidation with the aim of forcing Palestinians off their land (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 50).

41. There has been an increase in "racist violence and acts of vandalism on the part of Jewish settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory targeting non-Jews, including Muslims and Christians and their holy places", with impunity.[37]

42. Since 2008, Israeli settlers committed at least nine arson attacks against Palestinian mosques and 21 incidents where graffiti was used to desecrate mosques, churches and burial grounds (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 60).

43. In 2012 355 settler violence incidents were recorded, resulting in injuries to 169 Palestinians, in addition to 240 incidents resulting in damage to Palestinian private property.[38] Israeli security forces have, in numerous instances, failed to protect Palestinians from acts of violence committed by Israeli settlers, even when those acts occurred in their presence. Instead, in a number of documented cases, the Israeli military focused on dispersing Palestinians (see A/67/375, para. 19).

44. From March 2012 to January 2013, a total of 5,832 trees were destroyed or uprooted by settlers.[39]

45. Settler violence continues with a culture of impunity.[40] Of 162 Israeli-monitored police investigations of cases of vandalism of Palestinian-owned trees in the West Bank since 2005, only 1 resulted in an indictment.[41]

---

[34] Information provided by OCHA.

[35] Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/settlements/20121202_e1_human_rights_ramifications.

[36] See A/67/375, paras. 30-35; see also article 43 of the Hague Regulations annexed to the Fourth Geneva Convention, respecting the laws and customs of war on land, of 18 October 1907.

[37] See CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 28.

[38] Information provided by OCHA.

[39] Information received from United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

[40] Information received from OCHA.

[41] Yesh Din, Police investigations of Palestinian tree vandalization in the West Bank, October 2012.

West Bank wall

46. In combination with the gate and permit regimes, the wall continues to be the single largest obstacle to Palestinian movement within the occupied West Bank.[42] The International Court of Justice concluded in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, that "the wall and its associated regime are contrary to international law" and that Israel is obligated to cease construction of and dismantle the wall and to make reparations for damages caused by the construction of this 708 km wall (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1). Israel has yet to comply with the advisory opinion.

47. Israel cites security reasons for the construction of the wall, even though most of its planned route runs within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, not along the Green Line. In addition, the wall's route shows that its aim was to encircle as many Israeli settlements as possible, so as to enable de facto annexation to Israel of lands that lie to the Israeli side of the wall.[43]

48. These lands constitute 9.4 per cent of the territory of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and some of the most fertile land (238 km^2 of agricultural land)[44] of the West Bank.[45] About 21 per cent, 31 per cent and 13.1 per cent of the grasslands, forests and shrub lands, respectively, will also be annexed behind the wall upon its completion under the planned route.[46]

49. Palestinians aged 16 and above require "permanent resident" permits from the Israeli authorities to continue to live in their homes if located in the seam zone,[47] while Israelis and foreign visitors have unrestricted access (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 40).

50. To enable the construction of the wall, the Israeli army issued military orders for the expropriation of 30,261 dunums of land, 88 per cent of which (i.e. 26,622 dunums) are "private lands belonging to Palestinian residents".[48] In addition, the wall has resulted in the uprooting of 8.4 km^2 of olive groves and orchards.[49]

51. Thousands of Palestinian farmers whose lands lie in this zone also need to obtain hard to get permits from the Israeli authorities to have access to and work their own land. Farmers also may not be able to obtain permits for workers to carry out agricultural work and are not allowed to store equipment on their land in the seam zone.[50]

52. Herders in most cases are not allowed to bring livestock across the wall for grazing, thus about 90 per cent of the directly affected communities report that the wall had led to a decrease in their livestock numbers.[51]

---

[42] Information received from OHCHR; see A/67/372, para. 44.
[43] Btselem, Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier, October 2012, p. 4.
[44] Information provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
[45] Btselem, Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier, October 2012, p. 13.
[46] Information provided by UNEP.
[47] Information received from OCHA; the seam zone is the West Bank area that lies between the wall and the 1967 armistice Green Line.
[48] Btselem, Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier, October 2012, p. 14.
[49] Information received from UNEP.
[50] See UNCTAD document TD/B/59/2.
[51] Information provided by UNRWA.

Closure policies and mobility restrictions

53. Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory face daily obstacles and humiliation to travel both inside and outside the territory as a result of the wall, military checkpoints permit requirements and travel bans by Israel (see A/HRC/20/17/Add.2, paras. 61-63).

Blockade of the Gaza Strip

54. Israel continues to maintain the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since June 2007.[52] However, despite cited Israeli security concerns and relaxations introduced in its provisions in 2010 and 2012, this blockade amounts to collective punishment[53] and has "locked in" over 1.6 million people in what is one of the most densely populated areas on Earth. It has also led to the "de-development" of Gaza, with degrading living conditions.[54]

55. The movement of people from Gaza through the Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing is prohibited, apart from exceptional situations. In 2012 there was an improvement in the transfer of patients from Gaza via the crossing. During the same period, an average of fewer than 200 permitted Palestinians and international persons passed through the crossing each day, compared to an average of 26,000 per day in 2000.[55] At the same time, Israel generally prohibited entry into Gaza of Arab Christian clergy, including bishops and other senior clergy, to visit congregations or ministries under their pastoral authority.[56]

56. The Israeli military has gradually expanded restrictions on access to farmland on the Gaza side of the 1949 Green Line, and to fishing areas along the Gaza Strip coast. Overall, the restricted land area was estimated to encompass 17 per cent of the total land mass of the Gaza Strip and 35 per cent of its agricultural land. At sea, fishermen have been prevented from accessing some 85 per cent of the maritime areas to which they were entitled in accordance with the Oslo Agreements,[57] resulting in an 80 per cent decline in the overall catch.[58]

57. Since the end of the November 2012 military offensive, improved access to fishing and farming areas was recorded, without any significant easing of restrictions on the movement of people and goods through the Israeli-controlled crossings.[59]

Mobility restrictions within the West Bank

58. The application of access restrictions is discriminatory, targeting mostly Palestinian residents, for the benefit of the Israeli settler population.[60]

---

[52] A partial blockade was imposed on Gaza Strip in June 2006.

[53] Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Valerie Amos, 13 June 2012, at http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/USG%20Valerie%20Amos%20Statement%20on%20Gaza%2013Jun12.pdf.

[54] Information received from OCHA.

[55] Information received from OCHA.

[56] United States Department of State, International religious freedom report for 2011, at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=192889#wrapper.

[57] Information provided by OCHA.

[58] See A/HRC/21/33/AUV, para. 16.

[59] Information provided by OCHA.

[60] Information provided by OCHA; see also A/HRC/22/63, paras. 72-76.

59. In 2012 the number of obstacles (e.g. checkpoints, flying checkpoints, earth mounds, concrete blocks and ditches), witnessed a slight increase, from 529 to 542. In spite of a number of measures to ease access, 180,000 Palestinians in 55 communities are still compelled to use detours that are two to five times longer than the direct route to the closest city.[61]

60. Movement within the Israeli-controlled part of Hebron City, H2, also remained severely restricted, with Palestinian traffic banned from using most of the roads leading to the Israeli settlements and pedestrian movement also prohibited in other areas, including parts of what was once the main commercial artery.[62]

61. The Jordan Valley and Dead Sea area covers about 30 per cent of the West Bank and is home to nearly 60,000 Palestinians and about 9,500 Israeli settlers. Although there was improvement in Palestinian access to the Jordan Valley during 2012, it remains one of the areas most severely affected by the access restrictions imposed since 2000 and continues to be separated from the rest of the West Bank by dozens of physical obstacles.[63]

62. On 12 November 2012, the Israeli military issued "closed military zone" orders prohibiting anyone apart from residents from entering or approaching the villages of Bil'in, Ni'lin, Nabi Salah and Kafr Quddum on Fridays until March 2013. These are all villages in which weekly demonstrations have been held — and violently dispersed by security forces — regularly on Fridays for the past several years.[64]

63. About 40 per cent of the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, has been allocated to 135 settlements, with their municipal boundaries being designated as closed military zones into which the entry of Palestinians is restricted. In other cases, access by Palestinians to agricultural land in the vicinity of settlements has been limited by means of systematic intimidation by Israeli settlers. For the last few years, access to Palestinian private land within the settlements' outer limits has been subject to "prior coordination" with the Israeli authorities, even in cases where the fencing-off of Palestinian private land was carried out independently by Israeli settlers.[65]

64. Approximately 18 per cent of the West Bank has been designated by Israel as a closed military zone for training, or a "firing zone". The presence of Palestinians is formally prohibited in these zones without permission from the Israeli authorities, which is rarely granted. Many residents report that there is in practice little or no military training in their areas.[66]

65. Palestinians, who reside within firing zones, are mainly those who did so prior to the designation of the area as "closed". They face a range of other difficulties, including the confiscation and demolition of property, settler violence, harassment by soldiers, access and movement restrictions, and/or water scarcity. This is in contrast to Israeli settlement outposts established in the firing zones that do not normally face such measures.[67]

---

[61] Information received from OCHA.
[62] Information received from OCHA.
[63] Information received from OCHA.
[64] ACRI, http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/11/13/closed-military-zone-orders-delivered-to-activists/.
[65] Information received from OCHA.
[66] Information received from OCHA.
[67] Information received from OCHA.

66. Humanitarian organizations reported around 535 access incidents in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2012.[68] UNRWA alone reported a total of 235 such incidents involving its staff in 2012, affecting teachers, medical doctors and nurses, social and relief workers and field office staff. Moreover, access to seam zone areas for mobile health, food assistance, mental health services and social work teams was further restricted.[69]

67. Israeli restrictions hinder the ability of Palestinian Muslims and Christians to reach some places of worship and to practice their religious rites, particularly in Jerusalem. The wall also significantly impeded Bethlehem-area Christians from reaching the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and made visits to Christian sites in Bethany and Bethlehem difficult for Palestinian Christians who live on the Jerusalem side of the wall. Furthermore, foreign pilgrims and religious aid workers occasionally experienced difficulty obtaining access to Christian holy sites in the West Bank because of Israeli restrictions on movement in the West Bank. Israel's permitting regime also generally restricted most West Bank Muslims from accessing the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount.[70]

Access to East Jerusalem

68. Despite an easing of access restrictions for West Bank Palestinians to East Jerusalem, particularly during the month of Ramadan in 2012, such access continued to be restricted to permit holders who could only cross on foot using 4 of the 16 checkpoints functioning along the wall. The remaining 12 checkpoints are used by Israelis, international persons and Palestinians holding Jerusalem identification cards.[71]

69. Approximately 55,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites who reside on the West Bank side of the wall need to cross checkpoints to have access to health, education and other services in the heart of the city, to which they are entitled as residents of Jerusalem.[72]

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

70. Israel controls almost all Palestinian water resources and exploits around 89 per cent of the available water, leaving only 11 per cent to the Palestinians.[73] Recent figures indicate a per capita consumption at below 70 litres per day for Palestinians in the West Bank, while Israelis living in illegal settlements enjoy access of up to 450 litres per day.[74]

71. Wells and springs that are available to Palestinians are generally degraded, as the Israeli authorities deny Palestinians permits for installing, upgrading or protecting

[68] OCHA, Access incidents of humanitarian organizations database, http://www.ochaopt.org/dbs/acis/index.aspx?id=1010005.

[69] Information provided by UNRWA.

[70] United States Department of State, International religious freedom report for 2011, at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=192889#wrapper.

[71] Information provided by OCHA.

[72] Information provided by OCHA.

[73] Information provided by UNEP.

[74] Information provided by UNEP.

their water sources to provide sufficient quantities, while they simultaneously continue to drill deeper and more efficient wells for Israeli use.[75]

72. Furthermore, the construction of the West Bank wall has damaged, destroyed or made inaccessible vital sources of water, such as wells, cisterns and springs, which, once damaged, can rarely be repaired or replaced owing to planning restrictions.[76]

73. In addition, Palestinians are denied access to what are supposed to be shared water resources, such as the Jordan River.[77]

74. The targeting of water sanitation and hygiene facilities by the Israeli authorities, including basic systems and facilities funded by international donors, was increased in 2012. In the first nine months of 2012, 33 water infrastructure facilities and 16 sanitation infrastructure facilities were demolished, affecting over 1,500 persons.[78]

75. The increased pressure on available water resources, combined with the blockade and continued Israeli military strikes, has damaged water resources, exacerbating the water crisis in the Gaza Strip.[79]

76. Palestinians in Gaza have resorted to overextraction from the coastal aquifer.[80] This has caused the water table to drop below sea level and saline water and other pollutants to intrude, rendering 90 to 95 per cent of the water unfit for human consumption.[81]

77. The four wastewater treatment plants in the Gaza Strip have limited treatment capacity and efficiency.[82] As a result, about 89 million litres of untreated or partially treated sewage are discharged directly into the sea every day, posing a potentially serious health and sanitation hazard.[83]

78. The sanitation crisis is further compounded by approximately 40,000 cesspits in use in Gaza, of which 84 per cent are manually emptied by household members owing to the lack of connections to the sewage network.[84] In 2012 alone, three children drowned in pools of open sewage that cannot be adequately addressed as long as the blockade hinders sanitation development.[85]

79. In the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, only 31 per cent of Palestinians are connected to the sewage network. Only one wastewater treatment plant is operational owing to the Israeli authorities' refusal to grant the necessary permits for the development of sanitation and wastewater treatment infrastructure. As a result, almost 40 to 50 million cubic metres of sewage each year reach natural drainages as untreated sewage.[86]

---

[75] Information provided by OCHA.
[76] Information provided by UNEP.
[77] Information provided by UNEP.
[78] Information provided by OCHA.
[79] Information provided by UNEP.
[80] Information provided by UNEP.
[81] Information provided by UNEP.
[82] Information provided by UNEP.
[83] Information provided by OCHA.
[84] Information provided by OCHA.
[85] See Save the Children-Medical Aid for Palestinians, Gaza's children: falling behind, 2012, p. 3.
[86] Information provided by OCHA.

80. Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, generate 54 million cubic metres of domestic wastewater annually, with much of it entering the environment untreated.[87]

81. Apart from wastewater, solid waste from the settlements is dumped without restriction on Palestinian lands, fields and side roads, or is burned. Several polluting industries were relocated from Israel to the West Bank, including aluminium, tanning, plastics and electroplating, and do not abide by any environmental laws. The industrial waste produced by these industries and other Israeli industries located in the West Bank is disposed of on the nearby Palestinian agricultural lands, thereby constituting a threat to the environment.[88]

82. The wall also obstructs the flow of surface water, with trapped water causing flooding and the degradation of adjacent agricultural lands,[89] especially since Palestinians are not permitted to approach and clear the blockages in drainage pipes under the wall.[90]

83. The construction of the wall has caused physical separation as well as compaction of the soil, uprooting of trees and loss of agricultural land. The uprooting of trees leaves soils exposed and exacerbates land degradation.[91]

84. Farmers have been compelled to leave their lands barren because of the wall, losing a valuable source of reliable income and exposing the soil to erosion. Access difficulties also resulted in the overexploitation of remaining community lands, which also led to increased degradation.[92]

85. The construction of the wall has also altered and destroyed the natural habitats of a number of species, threatening biodiversity and depleting ecosystems. Common floral and faunal species are under serious threat of becoming rare, with some very rare species potentially disappearing altogether. About 22 terrestrial animal species are also under the threat of extinction, as the wall negatively impacted habitat fragmentation and prevented the movement of mammals for food and mating.[93]

Economic and social conditions

Economy

86. The economic growth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continues to be unsustainable and restrained by the policies of the Israeli occupation, namely persistent restrictions on movement and access.

87. Reflecting the slowdown in economic activity, unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza remained stubbornly high and rose to 22.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2012 from 21 per cent during the same period in 2011.[94] This indicates that labour-

[87] Information provided by UNEP.
[88] Information provided by UNEP.
[89] Information provided by UNEP.
[90] UNRWA-Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ), Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf.
[91] UNRWA-ARIJ, Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf.
[92] UNRWA-ARIJ, Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf.
[93] Information provided by UNEP.
[94] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Labour Force Survey, February 2013, p. 36.

intensive tradable sectors are excessively and disproportionately impacted by Israeli occupation policies.[95] One issue of concern is the duration of unemployment with adverse effects, including diminished employability and significant forgone income. The average duration of unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza is 11 months (6.6 months in the West Bank and 16.1 months in the Gaza Strip in 2012.[96]

88. Unemployment has been much higher in Gaza (averaging 33.5 per cent in 2010 and 2011) than in the West Bank (17 per cent in 2010 and 2011). By the end of 2012 (fourth quarter), this pattern persisted: the West Bank unemployment rate was 18.3 per cent, while it stood at 32.2 per cent in Gaza.[97]

89. The persistence of high unemployment in the West Bank can be attributed, among other things, to low levels of private sector investment, particularly in Area C, which covers 60 per cent of the West Bank, where investment is highly restricted.[98]

90. Overall wage growth lagged behind inflation, leaving 2011 average real wages 8.4 per cent lower than their level five years earlier.[99] Real wages have fallen over the past decade at all education levels. For example, among those with five years of schooling, real wages were about 30 per cent lower in 2009 compared to 1999 and among those with 16 to 18 years of schooling, wages in 2009 were lower by 10 per cent.[100]

91. In 2011 slightly more than one of four (25.8 per cent) individuals in the West Bank and Gaza were living below the poverty line (17.8 per cent in the West Bank and 38.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip). Similarly, about 12.9 per cent of individuals were living below the deep poverty line in 2011 (7.8 per cent in the West Bank and 21.1 per cent in the Gaza Strip).[101]

92. One significant feature of poverty in the West Bank and Gaza is that many Palestinians have consumption levels that are just above the poverty line, implying that in the event of an economic shock they could easily fall below the poverty line.[102]

93. Seventy-eight per cent of Palestinians living in the Jerusalem district and 84 per cent of children live below the poverty line — the worst rates on record.[103] In addition, 2011 data indicates that 40 per cent of the male Arab population and 85 per cent of Palestinian women in Jerusalem do not participate in the labour market, and more than 5,000 Palestinian businesses in Jerusalem have closed their doors since 1999.[104]

---

[95] See International Monetary Fund (IMF), Recent experience and prospects of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza, 19 March 2013.

[96] PCBS, Labour Force Survey, February 2013, p. 20.

[97] PCBS, Labour Force Survey, February 2013, pp. 37-38.

[98] See IMF, Recent experience and prospects of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza, 23 September 2012.

[99] See UNCTAD, TD/B/59/20.

[100] See World Bank, *Towards Economic Sustainability of a Future Palestinian State: Promoting Private Sector-Lead Growth*, April 2012.

[101] See PCBS, Levels of living and poverty in the Palestinian territory, June 2012.

[102] See World Bank, *Coping with Conflict? Poverty and Inclusion in the West Bank and Gaza*, 2011.

[103] See ACRI, East Jerusalem in Numbers, at http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/05/16/east-jerusalem-in-numbers/.

[104] See ACRI, Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem, May 2012.

94. The withholding and redirection by Israel of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Government of Palestine, and the decline in donor support observed in 2011 and 2012 had a negative impact on growth and exacerbated a deep fiscal crisis. In November and December 2012 Israel temporarily withheld Palestinian tax revenues as a punitive step in light of the November vote admitting Palestine as a non-member Observer State to the General Assembly. This led to the delay of the payment of salaries to civil servants, who have embarked on strikes in protest since mid-December 2012.[105]

95. The key long-term constraints blocking the emergence of a strong economy are the loss of Palestinian natural resources, land and water to occupation and settlements, and the isolation of Palestinian producers from regional and global markets, leading to their limited ability to procure production inputs and to export their goods and services.[106]

Food security

96. FAO maintains that while food security levels have improved throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, these gains are uneven and temporary in nature.[107]

97. More than 40 per cent of Palestinian households are classified as food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. After assistance, 1.3 million Palestinians (27 per cent of Palestinian households) are food insecure and unable to meet their basic food and household expenses.[108]

98. In the West Bank, post-assistance food insecurity still reaches 17 per cent, while these rates in the Gaza Strip reach up to 44 per cent.[109]

99. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA distributes food to over 700,000 refugees. Without improvements in the economy, which can only come about with the lifting of the blockade, that figure could rise to over 900,000.[110] The World Food Programme distributes food aid to an additional 300,000 persons.[111] Even so, about 44 per cent of recipients of food assistance remain food insecure.[112]

Public health

100. The continuing occupation of Palestinian territory hinders national health planning and the ability to implement health programmes. It leads many highly qualified doctors and other health personnel to leave the country, causing shortages in many specialties.[113]

---

[105] See Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), Briefing to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, 23 January 2013.

[106] See UNCTAD, TD/B/59/2, para. 5.

[107] Information received from FAO.

[108] Information received from FAO.

[109] Information received from FAO.

[110] Information received from UNRWA.

[111] Information received from UNSCO.

[112] See United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?, August 2012, p. 6.

[113] Information received from WHO.

101. In addition, the blockade of the Gaza Strip has adversely affected the training and movement of health professionals into Gaza, and restricted the construction and rehabilitation of health infrastructure.[114]

102. Patients from Gaza have to apply for Israeli permits in order to access hospital treatment outside Gaza. In spite of some easing of the restriction, two female patients died in 2012 after being delayed in accessing medical treatment. Other patients and/or patient-companions were detained at the Beit Hanoun border between Gaza and Israel while crossing with a valid permit.[115]

103. Before and during the November 2012 offensive, more than 40 per cent of the drug items in the essential drug list and more than 50 per cent of medical consumables were out of stock. Hospitals had difficulty coping with the shortages. Some hospitals reported reuse of single use supplies, as well as the use of alternative and less effective antibiotics when the drug of choice was not available.[116]

104. Also during the November 2012 offensive, 13 primary health care centres and 2 hospitals were partially damaged, whereas a field hospital sustained serious damage after being directly hit. In addition, three ambulance drivers were injured and six ambulances were damaged owing to the shelling.[117]

105. After the November offensive, high rates of psychosocial trauma were reported in Gaza, particularly among children and young people. The number of people receiving assistance in UNRWA health centres related to psychological trauma doubled from November to December, with 42 per cent of those being children under the age of nine.[118] As a conservative estimate, it is reasonable to assume that 25,000 to 50,000 people will need some form of psychological intervention to address the long-term effects of the offensive.[119]

106. In the West Bank, UNRWA reported a continued demand for mental health services during 2012, in connection with stress-related disorders. The demand can be directly linked to protection concerns related to the occupation, including violence, the wall, forced displacement and subsequent socioeconomic hardship.[120] Psychological studies of Palestinian children 12 years of age and under show a disturbingly high correlation between witnessing a parent beaten or humiliated by Israeli soldiers and the loss by the child of the will to live (see A/HRC/20/32, para. 8).

107. Moreover, 58.6 per cent of school children, 68.1 per cent of children (between 9 and 12 months of age) and 36.8 per cent of pregnant women suffer from anaemia. Stunting, or long-term exposure to chronic malnutrition, affects 10 per cent of children under five years of age in the Gaza Strip.[121] It is also estimated that 50 per cent of infants and young children under two years of age in the West Bank and the

[114] Information received from WHO.
[115] Information received from WHO.
[116] See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.
[117] See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.
[118] Information received from UNRWA.
[119] See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.
[120] Information received from UNRWA.
[121] See Save the Children-Medical Aid for Palestinians, Gaza's children: falling behind, 2012, p. 2.

Gaza Strip suffer from iron deficiency anaemia, which is associated with inappropriate feeding practices.[122]

Education

108. In the Gaza Strip, it is estimated that 250 new schools are now needed, including 100 UNRWA schools, and an additional 190 schools will be needed by 2020, to accommodate the increase in the student population.[123] Currently, more than 87 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza operate on a double shift basis. In some cases, shipping containers have been utilized as classrooms.[124]

109. During the November offensive, 286 educational facilities, including schools, kindergartens and tertiary education institutions, suffered damage or destruction, affecting at least 249,067 students.[125]

110. In the West Bank, the restrictive planning regime results in inadequate or a significant shortage of school infrastructure and exposes schools to the threat of demolition. Currently, at least 38 schools serving approximately 3,000 children in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem have been issued verbal and written stop-work or demolition orders by the Israeli authorities, meaning they are under constant threat of demolition. Access to school can be hindered by physical obstacles, threats and harassment by the Israeli army and settlers.[126]

111. The East Jerusalem school system, which operates under the Israel Ministry of Education and the municipality's Jerusalem Education Administration, suffers from severe neglect, disproportionately low budget allocations, overcrowding, the lack of available classrooms and many other woes.[127]

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

112. Israel continues to occupy the Syrian Golan Heights in its resolution 497 (1981) the Security Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights is null and void and without international legal effect (A/67/375, para. 45).

113. Approximately 19,000 Israelis have settled in 33 Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. That figure nearly equals the number of Syrians who live in the occupied Syrian Golan (ibid.).

114. Israel persists in implementing legal and administrative measures to provide socioeconomic incentives, security, infrastructure and social services to settlers residing in the occupied Syrian Golan, which amounts to the illegal transfer of its population into occupied territory (ibid.), whereas the five remaining Syrian villages of the occupied Syrian Golan are deprived of physical space for organic growth. In the village of Majdal Shams, approximately 11,000 Syrian citizens live in 1,200 houses. As new construction is not authorized, houses are either renovated or

[122] WHO, A/65/27/Rev.1, para. 4.
[123] See United Nations country team, Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?, August 2012.
[124] Information provided by UNRWA.
[125] Information provided by OCHA.
[126] Information provided by OCHA.
[127] See ACRI, Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem, May 2012.

new floors are added, without the requisite permits, to accommodate the growth of these households.[128]

115. Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan suffer from inequality regarding access to land, housing and basic services. The Citizenship Law continues to impact family ties for Syrians in the occupied Golan, which continue to be disrupted as a consequence of the territory's illegal annexation in 1981.[129]

116. High levels of taxes and restrictions on the use of water put a significant burden on Syrian farmers, who are thus in an unequal and disadvantaged position. Israeli settlements continued to receive the allotted share of 750 cubic metres of water per dunum of land, while the Syrian producers received 200 cubic metres. The cost of the water supply for agriculture to the Syrian farmers is approximately four times more than to the settlers. Water shortages usually result in the diversion of water resources to the settlements and, consequently, in some reduction of water provision to the Syrian farmers.[130]

117. In February 2013 Israeli media reported the intention of the Israel authorities to authorize drilling for oil in the occupied Golan Heights by issuing a license to prospect to a United States-Israeli energy company.[131]

IV. Conclusion

118. The prolonged Israeli occupation, its discriminatory regime and practices violate United Nations resolutions and international law, and should not be allowed to persist with impunity. The practices and regime, and their socioeconomic ramifications for the Palestinian people and Syrian citizens, will only result in increased suffering and, consequently, contribute to undermine peace and justice, which can only be achieved upon the realization of the right to self-determination for peoples under occupation.

119. Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan not only are illegal but also constitute an obstacle to peace. The international community should exert all possible efforts to ensure the implementation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. These efforts should include providing support for initiatives that seek to end the Israeli violations of international law in the occupied territories, especially Israeli settlement activities, as a first step towards a final and just resolution to the conflict that ends the occupation and allows the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, as guaranteed by international law.

---

[128] International Labour Organization (ILO), ILC.101/DG/APP, para. 137.
[129] CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 29.
[130] ILO, ILC.101/DG/APP, paras. 131-132; and information received from UNSCO.
[131] Yediot Ahronoth, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4347549,00.html.